

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DRC-01 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15

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R 030540Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8316

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY SUVA

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, NZ

SUBJECT: DRIVERS UNION LEADER RELEASED

REF WELLINGTON 2070

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ANDERSEN RELEASED TODAY WITHOUT PENALTY FOLLOWING WITHDRAWAL OF WRIT AGAINST HIM. PRIOR TO COURT DECISION DRIVERS UNION ANNOUNCED ITS MEMEBERS WOULD GO BACK TO WORK IF ANDERSEN WAS RELEASED. MINLABOUR WATT HAS INDICATED GNZ WILL REVIEW LEGISLATION CONCERNING ISSUANCE OF INJUNCTIONS AGAINST UNIONS. WITH EXCEPTION OF SEAMEN'S UNION, WHICH HAS DECLARED NATIONAL STOPPAGE, SITUATION RETURNING TO NORMAL. END SUMMARY.

2. AT COURT HEARING TODAY FERRY OWNER MR. DROMGOOLE WITH-DREW CIVIL WRIT WHICH HAD RESULTED IN COURT INJUNCTION AGAINST ANDERSEN THUS CLEARING WAY FOR COURT TO RELEASE ANDERSEN. AT MEETING PRIOR TO HEARING DRIVERS UNION VOTED RETURN TO WORK IF ANDERSEN RELEASED. AS DRIVERS ARE
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PRIMARY UNION INVOLVED MOST OTHER UNIONS ARE EXPECTED TO

FALL IN LINE WITH LITTLE DIFFICULTY. EXCEPTION IS SEAMEN'S UNION WHICH HAS VOTED NATIONAL WALKOUT PENDING GNZ ACTION TO REPEAL OR AMEND LEGISLATION WHICH ALLOWS ISSUANCE OF INJUNCTIONS AGAINST UNIONS. GIVEN NZ DEPENDENCE ON COASTAL SHIPPING A SEAMEN'S STRIKE LASTING MORE THAN THREE-FOUR DAYS WOULD HAVE SERIOUS EFFECT ON INTERNAL DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM.

3. GNZ CONTINUES TO KEEP ITS COUNCIL. MIN LABOUR WATT SPENT SEVERAL HOURS WITH PARTIES INVOLVED JULY 2 AND WITHDRAWAL OF WRIT IS OBVIOUS RESULT HIS EFFORTS. NEXT STEP BY GNZ WILL PROBABLY BE PURCHASE OF HYDROFOIL BY GNZ OR AUCKLAND REGIONAL AUTHORITY TO BE RUN AS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FACILITY. MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK TO THIS ACTION IS QUESTION OF PRICE.

4. GNZ WILL ALSO HAVE TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM OF AMENDING OR NOT AMENDING LAW CONCERNING INJUNCTIONS. IN ADDITION TO SEAMEN'S STRIKE THREAT ANDERSEN ANNOUNCED AFTER HIS RELEASE THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED BY HIGH GNZ OFFICIAL (PRESUMABLY WATT) THAT A CHANGE IN THE LAW WAS LIKELY. ANDERSEN ADDED THAT FINAL SETTLEMENT OF PROBLEM WAS PREDICATED ON FAVORABLE GNZ ACTION ON LAW. ANY EFFORTS TO AMEND LAW BOUND TO RUN INTO DIFFICULTIES IN PARLIAMENT. OPPOSITION WILL STRONGLY OPPOSE CHANGES AS WILL SOME MEMBERS OF LABOUR PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS INCLUDING ATTORNEY GENERAL FINALLY (REFTEL). FINALLY PRESENTLY OUT OF COUNTRY BUT HIS VIEWS AIRED NATIONALLY LAST NIGHT IN SIX WEEK OLD TV FILM CLIP OF HIS SPEECH TO LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE SAID HE WOULD NOT REMAIN IN PARTY IF LAW AMENDED TO MAKE TRADE UNIONISTS SEPARATE CLASS OF CITIZENS.

5. COMMENT: WHILE SITUATION IS RETURNING TO NORMAL ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF PAST THREE DAYS HAVE HAD MAJOR POLITICAL IMPACT. ANDERSEN HAS EMERGED A HERO FOR MILITANT TRADE UNIONISTS. FEDERATION OF LABOUR (FOL) EXECUTIVE IN GENERAL (AND FOL PRESIDENT SKINNER IN PARTICULAR) EXERCISED SOME INFLUENCE BEHIND THE SCENES BUT SHOWED THE PUBLIC LITTLE IN THE WAY OF LEADERSHIP ABILITY. AFTER SOME TEN HOURS OF MEETINGS EXECUTIVE COULD ONLY COME UP WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STATEMENT ENDORSING ACTIONS THAT HAD BEEN TAKEN. BIGGEST OUTSTANDING QUESTION IS TO WHAT EXTENT THIS IMBROGLIO WILL DECREASE SUPPORT FOR KIR GOVERNMENT. EMBASSY ESTIMATE IS THAT LABOUR NARROWLY AVOIDED A POLITICAL DISASTER. NZ VOTERS, ALREADY FED UP WITH INFLATION, ELECTRICITY CUTS AND SHORTAGES OF CONSUMER GOODS, WILL TRANSLATE ANDERSEN'S RELEASE AS GOVERNMENT FAILURE TO PROPERLY DEAL WITH UNIONS. KIRK WILL NEED ALL OF HIS CONSIDERABLE ABILITIES NOT

ONLY TO FEND OFF OPPOSITION ATTACKS BUT TO HOLD HIS OWN
PARTY TOGETHER OVER THE INJUNCTION ISSUE.
SELDEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Draft Date: 03 JUL 1974
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